(e) if so, the incentives being provided to the farmers to increase its production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) There is a good demand for Indian cardamom in the international market and the production of cardamom is keeping pace with the demand in domestic and international market as is evident from the data on export and production of cardamom in the recent past:

Export of Cardamom		Production of Cardamom	
Years	Quantity(Tons)	Years	Quantity(Tons)
1998-1999	476	1999-2000	9330
1999-2000	646	2000-2001	10480
2000-2001	1100	2001-2002	11365*

*Preliminary Estimate. Source: Spices Board

(d) and (e) The cardamom growers have been getting remunerative price for their produce. Some of the incentives provided to the farmers to increase the production of cardamom include implementation of schemes like production and distribution of quality planting materials; re-planting of old senile and uneconomic plantations; irrigation; land development, etc.

DEPB rate on important petrochemicals

5001. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have stepped up the DEPB rate on important petrochemicals;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) in what manner it would be helpful in improving the condition of these industries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Since the Customs Duty applicable to the inputs covered by Standard Input Output Norms has a bearing on the calculation of the DEPB rate, the rate is revised at the beginning of each financial year when customs duties are changed in the General Budget. If necessary, mid-term revision is also undertaken based on specific representation of the industry supported by the concerned Export Promotion Council/ Association and Administrative Ministry concerned.

In this process the DEPB rates in respect of certain petrochemical products, namely PTA, Linear Alkyl Benzene (LAB), Polyester Staple Fibre (PSF) amongst other items, were revised during 2001-2002. In the DEPB schedule effective from 1.4.2002, the DEPB rate on PTA has been further increased by 3% on account of increased in Customs Duty from 5% to 10% on Paraxylene, the main input in the manufacture of PTA.

The objective of Duty Entitlement Pass Book Scheme (DEPB) is to neutralize the incidence of Customs Duty on the deemed import content of the export product and keeping in view this objective the DEPB rates in respect of above items were revised based on the representation of the industry duly supported by the concerned Export Promotion Council/Association. Better neutralisation of import duties on inputs through improved DEPB rates helps the industry in becoming internationally competitive.

Bilateral trade with US

5002. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to have a comprehensive bilateral dialogue between India and the US;

(b) if so, the areas of commerce and trade on which this dialogue will primarily focus;

(c) the quantum of investment which is expected from US in the year 2002-2003; and

(d) the areas in which the investment is expected in the coming years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) Bilateral dialogue is a continuing process, which has further strengthened with US in recent years. The dialogue primarily focuses on bilateral trade and investment opportunities.

(c) and (d) Investments are made by entrepreneurs on the basis of their business assessments hence it is not possible to assess the quantum or the areas of investment.

New mid term export strategy

5003. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have outlined a new mid term export strategy for the next five years to achieve one per cent share in the world trade;